



MINUTES

BOARD OF EQUAL RIGHTS COMMISSIONERS

October 19, 2016 at 2:30 P.M. in City Hall, Rm. 301-A

Present:

Commissioner Jeffery Roman, Chair
Commissioner Marquette Baylor
Commissioner Mayhoua Moua
Commissioner Chez Ordonez, Co-Chair
Dana Kraemer, Dept. of Administration
Jessica Langill, Dept. of Administration
Matt Balistrieri, CDBG

Absent: Commissioner Aldira Aldape

Guests/Members of the public present:

Ben Roovers, City Attorney's Office
Patricia Ruiz-Cantu, Dept. of Administration
Tony Snell, PrideFest

The meeting was called to order at 2:35 p.m. by Commissioner Ordonez.

1. Introduction of new Equal Rights Specialist

Commissioner Ordonez welcomed the new Equal Rights Specialist, Jessica Langill. Commissioner Ordonez stated that the Commission was very excited about the position and talked about the importance of the role in that it sends a positive message and will assist the Commission in being more effective in reaching out to the community and following through on the ordinance. Commissioner Roman stated that he would like to know more about Ms. Langill because he was not part of the hiring process. Ms. Langill explained her previous non-profit roles at City Year Milwaukee, PEARLS for Teen Girls, and Lad Lake. She also mentioned her advocacy roles with the LGBTQ+ community. Commissioner Ordonez stated that himself and Commissioner Aldape were part of the vetting and interview process and they both felt Ms. Langill stood out based on her experience and hunger to get involved.

2. Approval of minutes from September 21, 2016 meeting

Commissioner Ordonez asked if there was any discussion about the minutes; no feedback from the Commission. Commissioner Roman moved to approve the minutes and Commissioner

Baylor seconded. With no objections from the Commission, the minutes were approved unanimously.

3. ERC Outreach and Marketing Materials

Commissioner Ordonez stated that in the last meeting they had discussed resources that the Commission was going to put out to the community. He stated that when they had initially talked about these materials, they had funds, but no longer had access to those funds. Commissioner Ordonez also stated they had some resources from the past, but most of it is outdated. Commissioner Ordonez talked about the importance of having tangible resources that would help the community in getting in contact with the ERC. Commissioner Roman brought up the ERC website and asked about where they were in the process of updating the website. Ms. Kraemer stated that the updating of the website had been put on hold until Ms. Langill was on board. Ms. Langill stated that she had already been trained to manage the website and was ready for updates when the Commission had them. Commissioner Ordonez stated that the pictures and bios needed to be updated first. Ms. Kraemer also stated that she has been keeping the website current and has been posted the agendas and meetings. Commissioner Ordonez talked about the importance of having a process for people to submit complaints and Ms. Kraemer stated Ms. Langill's contact information is already on the ERC website. Commissioner Ordonez stated they would need to discuss further about outreach and marketing. Commissioner Roman said that outreach and marketing would need to be addressed as part of the Strategic Plan of 2017. Mr. Balistrieri brought up a previous meeting with Community Organizers and asked if any calls had come in regarding the Organizers getting the word out. Mr. Balistrieri stated he is still in charge of those Organizers and wanted to know if there was more that could be done. Commissioner Roman stated that the conversation had been about some type of tool-kit that the Community Organizers could take out, but he also stated he was not sure if the tool-kit had been created. Commissioner Roman stated that this is something that should be talked about again. Mr. Balistrieri stated this was a good plan since Ms. Langill was now in the position and also stressed how important it is for the Organizers to understand the ERC. Commissioner Ordonez stated this was another reason there needed to be tangible resources for Organizers to give out when they are in the communities. Commissioner Ordonez brought up the budget and stated that they would need to know what they can afford when thinking about the outreach materials. Commissioner Ordonez also mentioned that the Commission had pens and other materials in the past and he told the Commissioners they should reach out to Ms. Langill with other marketing ideas. Ms. Langill stated that DOA had given the ERC \$5000 to be shared with Ms. Ruiz-Cantu for outreach materials.

4. Resource Guide for Immigrants & Refugees

Commissioner Ordonez stated that in the last meeting Ms. Robinson (DOA) had stated that the Department of Employee Relations had been unable to locate the working draft of the Resource Guide. Commissioner Ordonez stated the Commissioners had looked through their personal emails and files and had been unable to locate the draft. Commissioner Ordonez stated they had

tabled the discussion in order to give Commissioner Roman a chance to weigh in on if they should scrap the resource guide or if they should make it part of the Strategic Plan for 2017. He also asked if it should be a tangible resource guide or if it should be something that is online instead. Commissioner Ordonez suggested moving the Resource Guide to a subcommittee and Commissioner Roman stated he would like to add it to the Strategic Planning process as well. Commissioner Roman motioned to move the Resource Guide for Immigrants & Refugees to the Strategic Plan for 2017 and Commissioner Moua seconded. The Resource Guide will now be part of the 2017 Strategic Plan.

5. Office of African American Affairs

Commissioner Ordonez stated that this was on the agenda just in case Alderman Rainey had been able to attend, but he had not been able to attend. Commissioner Roman stated he would like to table the discussion until the Alderman was available to meet to talk about it.

Commissioner Roman made a motion for the chair to have a side conversation with Ald. Rainey to find out his availability for a future meeting. Commissioner Moua seconded. Discussion tabled.

6. Budget update

Commissioner Ordonez stated that the Mayor's Preliminary Budget is out and that there is no line item for the ERC. He stated that the Commission had talked with DOA and they may be able to get some funding through them. Commissioner Ordonez asked if it was still appropriate to address the lack of budget for the ERC in an upcoming Budget Hearing. Commissioner Roman asked if there were copies of the Preliminary Budget available and Mr. Balistrieri stated that there were. Commissioner Roman asked when the next public hearings would be. Ms. Ruiz-Cantu stated she would try to find the dates online. Commissioner Roman stated that as the chair in the past he had been involved in making suggestions for city budgets and had attended public hearings to do so. He stated that if the Commission would like to be a part of the process and make any statements or testimonies about the budget that they should talk about who would represent the commission and attend the hearings. Commissioner Roman stated that even if there is not a specific line-item in the budget for the ERC that they should be looking at other parts of the budget that touch on poverty disparity and other equal rights issues. Commissioner Roman requested that they get the dates for the hearings and then they would talk further about someone from the ERC attending. Commissioner Ordonez motioned to move the discussion about the Preliminary Budget to the Subcommittee of Community Outreach. Commissioner Moua seconded.

7. ERC 2016-17 Strategic Plan

Commissioner Ordonez stated that the Strategic Plan was a critical piece to define where the Commission is going to go in 2017, especially now that there is the Equal Rights Specialist and the assistance from the City Attorney's Office. Commissioner Ordonez stated that the Strategic Plan would guide Ms. Langill's position. Commissioner Roman recommended that Ms. Langill

should get access to previous Strategic Plans and go through them to get an idea on what had been done in the past. Commissioner Roman also stated that there needed to be a conversation about what role the ERC would have in working with the Fire and Police Commission, outreach and education, and alignment and coordination with additional initiatives and departments within City Hall. Commissioner Roman and Commissioner Ordonez stated that the biggest priority is to get the two vacancies in the Commission filled as soon as possible. He stated he would like the new Commissioners to start at the beginning of 2017. Commissioner Baylor asked Ms. Langill to get an update on the Commissioner's terms and term limits and bring the information to the next meeting. Commissioner Baylor stated that the Commission had been on hold for a while now and has to spend a lot of time in the near future building itself back up and reinventing itself. Commissioner Baylor stated she would like to hit the ground running in 2017 with a full Commission. Commissioner Ordonez also stated that another key part of the Strategic Plan will be to look at the standing ordinance and make changes to it that will make it more clear in terms of oversight and actions the city is willing to take, as well as to talk about expanding the jurisdiction of the ordinance. Commissioner Ordonez also stated that complaints coming into the ERC are still not being handled and that transgender housing issues would need to be handled by the ERC since they are not covered by the state. He stated that transgender issues should be a priority for the ERC. The Commission talked about involving the community in putting together the Strategic Plan, but it was decided it would be best to have the Commission put the plan together and involve the community more in the implementation after educating the public on the plan. Commissioner Baylor expressed the importance of the Commission having a solid plan and understanding of who they are and what they can do before they go out into the community. Commissioner Roman stated that the ERC should be able to develop a solid Strategic Plan in 3-6 months and then be ready to present it to the community. Commissioner Ordonez brought up the ERC's partnership with the Fire & Police Commission again and stated that the ERC could be set up as a place for community dialogue. Commissioner Baylor talked about transparency with the FPC and making sure that the ERC is proactive and starts the conversations about the partnership again. Commissioner Roman motioned to move the 2017 Strategic Plan to the subcommittee on community outreach, who will be meeting on Wednesday, November 9th at 10:00am, location TBD (at City Hall).

8. Next Meeting is November 16, 2016 at 2:30pm

9. Community Dialogue

Mr. Snell from Milwaukee Pride spoke to the Commission about the Human Rights Campaign's recent publication of their Municipal Equality Index. Mr. Snell stated that Milwaukee scored very low (71%) compared to Madison (who received a 100%) and other comparable cities. He said that Milwaukee scored low due to municipal services, relationship to the LGBTQ community as a city, and law enforcement's relationship and thoughtfulness when dealing with the LGBTQ community. Mr. Snell talked about cities in the south who also had higher scores than Milwaukee even though they have transgender bathroom laws and have not been known

for their progressive ideas. Mr. Snell asked that the Commission be serious about their commitment to the protection of Milwaukee's transgender people and finding a way to get a taskforce or liaison for the LGBTQ community in the Mayor's Office and Police Force. Commissioner Ordonez stated he would like to see the criteria used in the scoring. He also stated that the ERC could be considered the liaison to the Mayor's Office. Commissioner Ordonez suggested that the ERC find out what other cities are doing to score higher and to have more conversations about how to open up a better line of communication with the Mayor's Office. Mr. Snell talked about the importance of Milwaukee scoring higher because it sends a message to Milwaukee's current community and others thinking about moving to the city. Commissioner Roman stated that Madison has invested heavily in creating an infrastructure in the Mayor's Office and has created an entire department focused on diversity and inclusion. Commissioner Roman talked about the importance of making room for all communities and helping guide the Mayor's office in being intentional about inclusivity.

10. Adjourn

Commissioner Ordonez asked if there were any community events coming up and Commissioner Roman brought up National Human Rights Day on December 10th. He stated that the Commission should do an event or statement for this day. Commissioner Ordonez asked Ms. Langill to find out if the Mayor's office is planning on doing anything for Human Rights Day and to find out how the Commission can be involved. Mr. Snell stated that October 20th was Spirit Day in which community members should wear purple to show that they are against LGBTQ bullying. Ms. Ruiz-Cantu also stated that the Mayor had just sent out an email about wearing purple on October 20th for Domestic Violence Awareness. Commissioner Roman stated that it was important for the ERC to let Milwaukee know what events are happening for the protected communities the ERC serves. Commissioner Ordonez stated it would be good to get a community calendar up and running on the ERC website and Ms. Langill said she would be able to develop and update that. Commissioner Roman stated that the calendar should be part of the Strategic Plan for 2017 and that everyone should do some research on their own to find out what events are coming up within all communities. Commissioner Baylor stated she has a list already that she can bring. Ms. Ruiz-Cantu stated that United Nations Day is on Monday, October 24th and the Mayor would be speaking in the rotunda at 9am for an event called "Imagine the World without the United Nations." Ms. Langill stated that Project Homeless Connect is taking place on October 20th at Marquette University. Commissioner Ordonez asked for a list of partnering agencies and asked Ms. Langill if she could send it out to the Commissioners. Commissioner Ordonez stated the Commissioners do not have access to the Legislative Calendar and asked if Ms. Langill could keep the Commission updated on anything that may be of importance to them. Commissioner Baylor motioned to adjourn the meeting; Commissioner Moua seconded; motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 3:36 p.m.

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